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the origin of the Lancelot legend. The supposition that the Sea Maiden 'motif'—as she says—was the link between the *Lancelot* and the Three Days' Tournament, in the absence of further evidence must also be taken *cum grano salis*. Finally, the author would do well to omit from her second edition the bantering remarks (pp. 15, 43 and 47) passed on the work of so eminent a scholar as Professor Foerster.

In general, however, Miss Weston's little work is executed with extraordinary zeal and skill, and deserves all the attention which it is sure to receive.

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NORWEGIAN GRAMMAR.

Lehrbuch der norwegischen Sprache. Nach den neuesten und besten Quellen bearbeitet, von J. C. POESTION. Zweite, vermehrte Auflage. A. Hartleben's Verlag. Wien, Pest, Leipzig. [1901]. 8vo., XII + 178 pages.

The hearty reception that has been accorded Poestion's excellent little Grammar not only in Germany but also in the Scandinavian countries, Norway and Sweden in particular, has induced the author to offer a second, enlarged edition which embodies the chief results of recent studies in the literary as well as in the spoken language of Norway. The phonology of the new edition is based in part on the works of Brekke,¹ Western² and Joh. Storm,³ but especially on Jespersen's *Fonetik*, *En systematisk fremstilling af læren om sproglyd*, Copenhagen, 1897-1899. The Accidence is based on the last edition (1900) of the indispensable *Norsk grammatik* of Hofgaard, while Falk and Torp's *Dansk-Norskens Syntax* has been used in the syntactical notes under the forms. The difficult subject of good literary and cultured spoken Norwegian of to-day is clearly and intelligently presented in a form that is both popular and at the

same time thoroughly scholarly. The peculiar language conditions in Norway make the grammarian's task a very difficult one, difficult to the native Norwegian as well as to the foreigner. The wide divergence between the language of Denmark and the language of Norway (excluding the rural dialects) cannot be too strongly stressed. The present composite "Landsmaal," which has grown out of the movement of the "language strivers," which began with Aasen, originated in a time when linguistic conditions were very different from what they now are. Then the cry of the ultra-nationalists was justified; the language of literature, the language of the church and the state, the language of the theatre, the language of the cultured classes was Danish. This together with the fact of a Danish theatre in the Capital was, in the eyes of the radicals, a badge of intellectual dependence upon Denmark. In 1848 appeared Aasen's *Det norske Folkesprogs Grammatik*, and in 1850 followed his *Ordbog over det norske Folkesprog* (*Norsk Ordbog*, 1873). It needed only his *Prøver paa Landsmaalet*, and the "new-Norse" language existed ready-made, a language that certainly was not Danish and that was sufficient. But the radicals failed to recognize that it just as certainly was not present spoken Norwegian. It was a composite, based for the most part on West Norwegian dialects. Later, it attempted to assimilate the chief characteristics of Central and East Norwegian. It was an unnatural outgrowth of very peculiar conditions, as a language of course wholly impracticable and from the very nature of the case doomed to failure. But that it has had a marked influence on the more rational language movement in Norway which began with Wergeland and in which Björnson and Ibsen stand to-day must be admitted. Now this more conservative movement, which has been in progress for sixty years or more is of the greatest importance. It has been slow but sure and far-reaching. We have it represented in the most conservative aspect in literature in the novelists and dramatists. Then we have it in the cultured spoken Norwegian of Christiania and the cities, which under the general Norwegianizing process, by influence of the dialects, especially the East Norwegian dialects, has become widely different from cultured spoken Danish. Poestion has rightly recognized this fact and emphasized it in his intro-

¹ K. Brekke, *Bidrag til dansk-norskens lydlære* (in *Aars og Voss's skoles indbydelsesskrift* for 1881), Kristiania, 1881.

² Aug. Western, *Kurze Darstellung des norwegischen Lautsystems* in Viëtor's *Phonetische Studien*, II, pp. 259-282.

³ Joh. Storm, *Norsk Lydekunst med Omrids af Fonetiken* in *Norvegia* I, Kristiania, 1884, pp. 1-132.

duction, p. 3, as well as in the title of the book. He appreciates the importance of the colloquial language and the city dialects and has produced a book that is thoroughly reliable. Parallel with the facts of the present literary language is given the varying usage of the "Omgangssprog," together with which occasional attention is also given to the city dialects where these illustrate any general tendency of the language. Perhaps a little too much attention has been paid to the "Vulgarsprog" of Christiania, the reading selection at the end might have been omitted. Ibsen's prose should have been represented in the selections offered. The contents of the book is divided as follows: an introductory chapter on the Norwegian language pp. 1-4; Phonology 5-78, Accidence 79-163, Reading selections 164-178. Pages VII-IX give a list of the most important books and articles on present Norwegian.

The author calls attention to the fact that the similarity between Norwegian and Danish is largely an orthographic one. The prominent difference in intonation as between West Norwegian and East Norwegian is noted, as also that between East Norwegian and South Norwegian. When the latter is characterized as possessing a "danisierende Aussprache" the author is incorrect, for the soft consonants *g*, *b*, *d*, in South Norwegian of Stavanger, Lofoten and the neighboring region are certainly not due to Danish influence, but are a native development.⁴

In the phonology a few mistakes have been noted. The author defines correctly the peculiar Norwegian closed *o*: "Es wird mit besondersstarker Rundung der Lippen gesprochen, und klingt auffallend an *u* an." For all practical purposes it may be defined as the same sound as *oo* in English *poor*. The parenthetic remark, however, that it resembles the European *u* somewhat more than the Swedish *o* is not correct. To a foreigner the Norwegian *o* seems nearer to European *u* than to *o*, but a Norwegian hears a very distinct difference between his *o* and this *u*, while to him the Swedish closed *o* produces the effect of a *u*-sound as compared with his own *o*. The Swedish *o* is one step

nearer European *u* than the Norwegian *o* is, just as Swedish *u* is one step nearer *ü* than the Norwegian *u* is. Likewise Swedish *y* (*ü*) is nearer *i* than is Norwegian *y*, the latter being approximately halfway between Swedish *y* and Danish *y*. The author's statements on *u* and *y* § 20, 1 and § 21 are therefore correct, though not that on *o* § 19, 1. Under "*hold* (gewöhnlich noch *huld* geschrieben)" § 19, 2^b it might properly have been stated that *hold*, which is the more correct form (cf. O.N. *holdr*), is the peculiarly Norwegian form and preferred in Norway. *Huld* is the Danish form. We furthermore have the *o*-vowel in *behold*, *i god behold* = *i god hold* (*i god huld*). The last part of the definition of the diphthong *ou* that it is like *ou* in Engl. *house* needs to be modified for American users of the Grammar. The sound is approximately *eu* or *öu*. The regular and best pronunciation of *spodsk* is *spotsk* not *spossk* (page 31, iv). There is considerable variation with regard to the pronunciation of *ds* after a short vowel. In case of the word *phudselig*, I doubt that we can as yet pronounce in favor of the pronunciation *plusseli* as opposed to *phutseli* (p. 31, iv, 1). The word *jente* is hardly now to be regarded as "vulgär" (§ 49).

In the discussion of the gender of substantives, under rule 1, § 88, nouns which are common gender by meaning, the exceptions *et Bud*, *et Afkum*, *et Fattiglem* and *et Vidne* should have been added. *Lyng* should have been included under Rule 2 instead of being given under the exceptions, for *en Lyng* is the usual, *et Lyng* rarer. In Norwegian *Byg* is also com. gen., which might have been indicated under 2. Among the exceptions to rule 2 *Kornet* should not have been omitted. *Regn* (Rule 4) is both com. and neut. gen. So also *Minut* and *Sekund* are often com. gen. There is undoubtedly a tendency on the part of these words to assume the gender of other names of divisions of time as *en måned*, *en Uge*, *en Time* (cf. also *Tiden*). In Norwegian *Bor* (in 10) is often com. gen. The paragraph of exceptions in *-n* given under Rule 3 of nouns whose gender is determined by ending seems to have gotten out of its proper place, for there certainly is no connection between substantivized infinitives in *-en* and derivatives in *-n*. These latter are in Norwegian regularly neuter if concrete and should

⁴Amund B. Larsen in his *Oversigt over de norske Bygdemaal*, Kristiania, 1898, pp. 63-64, also seems to attribute the voiced stops in the Stavanger dialects to Danish influence.

have been so given under neuters according to form § 89, b. Rule 4 (p. 86) that nouns in *sel* are com. gen. with the exception of names of utensils which are neuter is incomplete. The rule is that concrete nouns in *sel* or nouns that can be or are apt to be thought of as concrete are neuter, and are mainly formed from verbal stems. The list includes: *et Aadsel, et Bidsel, et Bindsel, et Brændsel, et Dæksel, et Hængsel* (and dial. *et Op-hængsel*), *et Barsel, et Fængsel, et Stængsel, et Skræmsel, et Sysse, et Æsel*. Cf., however, the concrete nouns not formed from verbs, *en Tidsel, en Bossel, en Kapsel, en Pensel*. Abstract nouns in *-sel* are, however, com. gen.; so *Glemsel, Hørsel, Blygsel, Trængsel, Færdsel, Rædsel, Skjøtsel*, etc., etc. Cf. also *en Advarsel*, a warning, an admonition, and *et Varsel*, a warning = a notice, an omen (and an evil omen). *Sand*, p. 87, 1, is in Norwegian also com. gen. Under exceptions to Rule 1 of nouns that are neuter by meaning should have been added, *Maden, Stenen, Graniten, Luften* and *Silken*. P. 88, 2, the statement: "*et led* (in d. volkl. Sprache auch *en led*) ein Gelenk, ein Glied" is misleading. The word is regularly *en Led* in popular speech when it means 'a joint,' and always *et Led* in the meaning 'a wicket, a gate.' The noun *Rus* is used both in the neuter and the com. gen. in Norwegian, though preferably the former. Compound nouns (§ 91) in Norwegian take the gender of the last element of the compound, e. g. *et Armbånd, en Spiseske*, etc. Under the exceptions I would have stated that if the last element of the compound is an abstract of the com. gen. but the compound itself is concrete, or may be thought of as such, it becomes neuter, e. g., *et Måltid* but *Tid-en*; *et Folkefærd, et Gjenfærd*, but *Færden*; *et Vidnesbyrd*, etc. *Ben* is neut. by the rule that mass names and names of material are of that gender, but the compound *Gråben*, 'wolf' (lit. 'grayleg') becomes com. gen. by the rule that names of animals are so. Evidently a misprint is *Mårenbla'*, p. 27, for *Mårnbla'*, the colloquial pronunciation of *Morgenbladet*, and on p. 85 *et Flod* for *en Flod*.

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THE UNDERSTANDING AND THE MISUNDERSTANDING OF DANTE'S ANIMAL LORE.

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS:—I should like to point out very briefly a few of the mistakes made by Dr. Kenneth McKenzie who has recently reviewed in *Modern Language Notes* my book on Dante and the Animal Kingdom. Though the task of judging this work was, as Dr. McKenzie says, unsought, one cannot help feeling from his tone that it was not unwelcome. There is a tone of suppressed emotion, and ever and anon one is scorched, as it were, by flames of indignation. In a final glow after his thoughts are all in type, Dr. McKenzie adds a footnote in which he triumphantly declares that his views are substantially the same as those of the *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana* and of *The Athenaeum*, but he owns that "somewhat more favorable reviews" have appeared in *The Nation* and elsewhere. "Somewhat" seems a reluctant word; it might not have been used at all if Dr. McKenzie had been supplied by an obliging publisher and a "clipping bureau." *The Athenaeum* does agree substantially with Dr. McKenzie. Both are unwilling and both are rather fierce; but, of the two, Dr. McKenzie is perhaps the fiercer. But it interests me to learn that Dr. McKenzie finds himself even substantially in agreement with the review in the *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, for here are the words with which each begins: "Era questo argomento da libro? sinceramente non ci pare." "A study of Dante's references to the animal world is important, not merely for the understanding of Dante, but for the light it throws on the scientific ideas of the Middle Ages." A critic who calls this substantial agreement needs analysis; but I pass on to an accusation of flippancy as to the Bible. My flippancy, thinks Dr. McKenzie, is very noticeable. To prove this he quotes two phrases: "lions stricken with lock-jaw for the benefit of Daniel" is one of them; the other is "the nightmare of the Apocalypse." He declares, also, that I am not familiar enough with the Bible "to avoid the blunder of saying 'straight and narrow path.'" Are we, then, for-